

Commentary • Opinion •

Chino Hills' powerline battle

Chino Hills residents may well wonder if fighting the Edison Company's existing plan to bring more power to the area is worth \$600,000. That's a big cost, if the city eventually has to fork out that much general fund money for a lobbying effort.

The proposal is to bring electricity generated by "wind power" from Tehachapi to the Chino substation, to help meet the growing demand of increased development in the valley and meet state requirements for using alternative power sources..

The new lines and towers would follow the existing Edison easement from the Los Angeles County line to Highway 71. However, new towers could be twice the height as present ones, and the capacity of lines would double.

This has raised concerns ranging from health to noise and aesthetics. The lines pass for the most part through a residential area,

and it is probably a surprise to most that the old ones have not been active since the seventies. There is also speculation that home values would be affected, although there is no proof of this. At one time here nobody would try to build homes next to the prison.

Chino Hills is supporting an alternate route, through the Chino Hills State Park and along a route that would still pass by residential areas, but most of these have yet to develop. What the increase in cost would be is not yet known. Apparently there are other facts that need some sunlight, such as how many towers there are now vs. how many there will be under the new plan.

The main decision lies with the state Public Utilities Commission, and Edison carries much more weight there than does an individual city like Chino Hills. That's what the (up to) \$600,000 is supposed to go for—to give Chino Hills a leg up in the matter. Worth it? That's a gamble.